

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 00927 221325Z

41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 /074 W

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R 221254Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7077

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 927

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, IS, JO

SUBJECT: ISRAELI EXPROPRIATION OF WEST BANK LAND

REF: JERUSALEM A-142, NOVEMBER 2, 1972

1. EAST JERUSALEM NOTABLE ANWAR KHATIB TOLD ME MAY 13 THAT ISRAELI MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAD INFORMED ARABS WITHIN PAST FEW WEEKS THAT IT WAS EXPROPRIATING VERY LARGE TRACT BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND DEAD SEA. HE SAID BETHLEHEM DISTRICT MILITARY GOVERNOR BRILL HAD INFORMED MAYORS OF AFFECTED AREAS THAT LAND OWNERS SHOULD APPLY FOR PAYMENT. KHATIB CLAIMED TRACT AMOUNTED TO 70,000 DUNUMS.

2. I CHECKED WITH BETHANY MAYOR ABU REESH, ONE OF THOSE WITH WHOM BRILL HAD SPOKEN. ABU REESH CONFIRMED MY ASSUMPTION THAT EXPROPRIATED LAND WAS PART OF TRACT, SAID AT TIME TO BE 70,000 DUNUMS (70 SQUARE KILOMETERS), CLOSED BY MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN LATE 1972 (REPAIR) BUT NOT EXPROPRIATED THEN. (NORMAL ISRAELI SYSTEM IS TO CLOSE LAND TO ALL BUT AGRICULTURAL USE AS FIRST STAGE, LATER TO TAKE IT FOR THEIR OWN USE.) ACCORDING TO ABU REESH, LAND TO BE EXPROPRIATED IS
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 00927 221325Z

BOUNDED ON NORTH BY JERUSALEM-JERICHO ROAD AND EXTENDS

FROM WITHIN BETHANY TO DEAD SEA. HE WAS UNCERTAIN OF WIDTH OF STRIP SINCE ISRAELIS DECLINES PROVIDE MAP. 7,000 DUNUMS OF BETHANY LAND IS INCLUDED, MAINLY NOT BUILT ON. REMAINDER OF CLOSED AREA, INCLUDING LAND TO NORTH OF ROAD, NOT YET BEING EXPROPRIATED. ABU REESH SAID HE UNDERSTOOD ISRAELIS INTEND TO BUILD HOUSING ON LAND. HE ADDED THAT NONE OF OWNERS WOULD AGREE TO ACCEPT PAYMENT.

3. COMMENT: THESE LAND OPERATIONS OF ISRAELIS ARE ALWAYS OBSCURE AND FREQUENTLY ALARM IS SOUNDED SEVERAL TIMES BY ARABS OVER SAME AREA. IT DOES APPEAR, HOWEVER, THAT SOME MOVE IS BEING MADE BY ISRAELIS IN DIRECTION OF SECURING CORRIDOR FROM JERUSALEM URBAN AREA TO DEAD SEA. CORRIDOR WOULD SEEM TO INCLUDE MA'ALE ADUMIM INDUSTRIAL SITE AND HOUSING TO BE BUILT IN CONNECTION WITH IT, BUT MUCH MORE BESIDES. WE NOTE THAT ARAB SKEPTICISM AT TIME LAND WAS CLOSED REPORTED REPAIR, HAS PROVED MORE ACCURATE THAN ISRAELI REASSURANCES.
DAY

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